

CHRIST GOD-MAN.

A S E R M O N

Preached before the

University of Oxford,

At ST. MARY's,

On SUNDAY, JULY 30, MDCCXLIX.

W I T H

A P R E F A C E,

Occasioned by a Book lately published, entitled,
Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Mr. William
Whiston, in relation to the DIVINITY of our
Saviour, and the Controversy concerning it.

By JOSEPH EDWARDS, M. A. *K*
Vice-Principal of EDMUND HALL.

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CHRISTOPHER

SERMON

University of Oxford

CHRISTIANITY

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A. P. R. C. E.



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JOSEPH EDWARDS, M.A.

Vice-Principal of ...

LONDON

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INDEX

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P R E F A C E.

THE following Discourse is the same which I preached at *St. Mary's Oxon*, as mentioned in the Title Page, in which are only omitted some Arguments, and a few others added, with respect to the End and the Persons for whose sakes I, at last, have printed it. What is printed (including this Preface) is intended to give such young Persons as may happen to read it, a succinct, but yet, I hope, sufficiently comprehensive View of the *Arian* Controversy; to exhibit to them the Sources from whence the *Arians* derive their Objections from Scripture, against our Lord's Divinity; to obviate those Objections; and to furnish their Understandings with true and easy Solutions of them; that so I may, if possible, contribute to their being better fortified against the cunning Craft of some, who lie in wait to ensnare and deceive, and have deceived, and do deceive too many unfurnish'd Minds. I look on a late Performance, entitled, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Mr. William Whiston*, as but too likely to do Hurt to some such on this Head, and that some speedy Antidote is requisite, and may do Service against it. And therefore, in more effectual Pursuance of this End, to the best of my mean Abilities, I will beg leave to premise a few Things here concerning this Author and his Performance.

Mr. *Whiston* has the Character of, and, I make no Doubt, is not only a very learned and ingenious, but a very sincere good Man: Nor ought he (certainly) to be blamed, but on the contrary highly to be commended, for endeavouring by all lawful Methods, in his Power, to promote that which he esteems to be true Christianity. Only I could wish his laudable Zeal for this End had not transported him without the Bounds, I do not say of Candor, and Charity, but of Justice towards many very eminent Names he makes so extravagantly free with: By which he proposes, I doubt not, to abate of the Prejudices which, he is afraid, might otherwise lye on their account against his Opinion of our Saviour, and to give Credit to it; which I the more willingly remark, because to impute his licentious Censures to this Motive, is the most favourable Construction that can be put upon them.

I think I may without any breach of Good Manners, or transgressing the Rules of Charity towards Mr. *Whiston*, observe that he appears to be a very rare and uncommonly happy Man in his own Opinion. In the fourth Century, the same Age in which the *Nicene* Council was held, it seems plainly to have been a ruled Point, in the real Conviction both of those who believed our Lord's Divinity, and of those who did not, that the *Antenicene* Fathers were clearly, and undeniably of the same Faith with the former, and the *Athanasians* as Mr. *Whiston* styles them: For these offered and engaged to

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P R E F A C E.

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put the Trial of their Cause on this Issue, and the *Arians* declined, and durst not accept their Challenge. But both were miserably deceived in this Matter, if we will believe Mr. *Whiston*, who rests fully satisfied in his own Opinion, (against the united Testimony of all, both the Friends and Enemies to our Lord's Divinity, given on a remarkable Occasion, at a Time when very many more ancient Writings were in their Hands, than are now extant) that the *Antenicense* Fathers were on his Side of the Question, and did not maintain our Saviour to be the true God. Very remarkable truly! But yet it is not so strange as that which follows. Mr. *Whiston* seems completely confident, that the *Nicene* Council decreed that Faith concerning our Saviour's Divinity, which he holds and defends, though if this be true, it is certain that this their Decree was not rightly understood by any body in those Times but *Eusebius (Cæsariensis.)* All the rest of this venerable Assembly, both the vastly great Majority who consented to, and acquiesced in its mentioned Decree, and the very few Reclaimants who opposed their Voice against it, intirely misapprehended it. By Mr. *Whiston's* own declared Opinion, not long after the passing of this Decree all the Pastors of the Church, and the Church separated and divided into almost all *Athanasians*, and a very few *Arians*, both of whom were quite beside the Cushion, and wide of the Mark; the true, and the *Nicene* Faith lying

ing concealed in the middle between the two Extremes, and at a very great Distance from them. In many Things Mr. *Whiston* is a Protestant, in some a Papist. In many Points he agrees with the Established Church of *England*, in many with Dissenters from its Communion. His true and simple Christianity which was delivered by our Lord to his Apostles, and by them transmitted to his Church, is a Mixture of Ingredients, extracted from the several Religions that have existed, and do exist, in ancient, and modern Times, in these Parts where we live, and all over the World; which have all some Things that are right in them, and many which are very wrong and erroneous. Mr. *Whiston* seems to have a peculiar, and strong Antipathy against *Athanasius*, and his very Name. I cannot but wonder that he should: for agreeing in some great Circumstance is very conciliative of Affection and Regard between the Persons so agreeing. And what was said of *Athanasius*, by a very high, but natural *Hyperbole*, (when vile Scandals, and false Accusations, and wicked Judgments of corrupt, and packed Judges, had depressed his Cause, by oppressing his Person) *Athanasius against all the World*, and *all the World against Athanasius*, is literally true of Mr. *Whiston*, with whom, I am well informed, there is no Soul that will join Communion, though the ingenious and humane Mr. *Foster* does indeed permit him to partake with him, to Mr. *Whiston's* great Comfort.

After

After all, I do not affirm that it is impossible but that Mr. *Whiston's* Religion may not be Whim and Caprice, but the only true one in the World; but I think it is very improbable it should; and that what hath been said is more than a sufficient Counterpoise to the Weight of Authority with respect to our Saviour's Divinity, which Mr. *Whiston* labours to draw into his Scale, and rob the opposite one of, at the Expence of so much Christian Charity, and common Humanity.

Mr. *Whiston* does not believe that our Saviour consisted of an human Mind, but that that Nature with which he descended from Heaven was the only N^g in him. With all his Singularities of Opinion, in Philosophy, and Divinity, he hath such just and worthy Notions of the Godhead, that he must needs allow this Opinion to be highly absurd and blasphemous, in consequence of what is alledged to this Purpose from Scripture under the first Head of the ensuing Discourse, if our Saviour be the true and supreme God.

Now that there is only one God, is clear both in the *Old*, and *New Testament*; and therefore if it be clear from the latter that our Saviour is God, he is the one true God, that necessarily existent Being who is supreme over all others, and on whom all others depend. Our Proofs from the *New Testament* that our Saviour is God, and the same God with the Father, are many and various. I will very briefly barely mention some of the principal of them.

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He is expressly styled God; God over all; he is no dependent Being, or Creature, for whatsoever was made, he made. It is plain both from Reason and Scripture, that the Creation of the World is the Work of God; otherwise *the invisible Things of him from the Creation of the World* would not be clearly seen, being understood by the Things that are made; even his eternal Power and Godhead. And therefore the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, after he has, in as direct and strong Words as possible, told us, that *Jesus* made the *World*, and that he was counted worthy of more Glory than *Moses*, inasmuch as he who hath builded the *House*, hath more Honour than the *House*; expressly assures us, that *he that built all Things is God*. To him all the same Attributes, Titles, and Characteristics, which are appropriated to the only God in the *Old Testament*, are likewise in much, or exactly the same Words, given in the *New*. Whereas the God of the *Jews*, and the only God is to be worshipped, and he only to be served by any Creature; our Saviour is propounded as the Object of Worship and Divine Service to Angels, and all Creatures.

We might therefore, from these Proofs and many others, be very certain, tho' God's Word had not expressly told us so, that the Father and Son (it doth not say *agree in*, but) *are one*, the same numerical God, of the same individual Nature, Essence and Substance. For tho' they are different Persons, they are not co-ordinate
but

but subordinate, they are Father and Son, the one being the original Fountain, and Source of the other, from whom he receives the Godhead, and all that he is, and hath, by necessary Communication from him, and is God of God, the same numerical God of the same numerical God. Therefore the Father, being the Fountain and Original of the Son, from both of whom the Holy Ghost necessarily proceeds; and both being necessarily included and contained in the Father as their Origin, and the self same God by natural, or necessary Communication from him; the Father is often styled God, and the only God (not exclusively of, for that is absolutely impossible, but including both the two other Persons) not only in Contradistinction to other Gods so styled; but when he is spoken of with reference to the Son in his human Nature, and as *Christ*. And so likewise in these, and such like Circumstances, which render it proper and convenient according to the Rules of Language, the Word *God* is used when the Father is primarily meant, including the Son in his divine Nature, and the Holy Ghost. All which clearly flows from the Father's being the Fountain and Original Person, from whom the other two are naturally and necessarily derived, and so are the same God with him. And therefore it is indisputable, that the Son is the *one true* God; so that being thus necessarily derived from and included in the Father, and the same God with him, therefore whatsoever the Father

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hath,

hath, the Son hath likewise, who is to be honoured with the same Honour that he is, and whatever Honours the Son receives, redound to the Glory of the Father.

All these (and not a few more might be added, but it is most unnecessary) are so many various and tried Proofs, each of which is of itself sufficient to defend our Lord's Divinity, and maintain his just Title to truly Divine Honour and Worship in common with the Father. But in that collected and united Force, and in the Order in which I have briefly, and imperfectly represented them, they plainly shew themselves to be most invincible, and that it is not possible to make any Impression on them. For as to those metaphysical Subtilties and Refinements, with which some of late have made a shew of undermining them, they are most evidently only Noise and Bustle, and nothing else; of which Mr. *Whiston*, after he has seen all that has been done, and, in all Probability, all that can be done in that Way, is ashamed, and very justly owns that the only Rule of Judging, is God's Word, in this Point. And what then has Mr. *Whiston* to oppose to such strong Proofs from Scripture, after all his much Study of this Point, and his much Experience of this Controversy, and what has been said in it, from first to last? He makes free with the Canon of Scripture, and insists upon it, that such and such Texts are spurious, and were foisted in to serve a Turn. But this bold and desperate Thrust stands him but
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in small Stead, and he pushes it but a little Way. Therefore he would palm on the Christian World that notorious Imposture the *Apostolical Constitutions*, as Canonical Scripture. To which Pretence and Refuge I need say nothing. But he insists upon it that there are plain Texts of allowed Scripture, containing contrary Doctrine to that which is affirmed to be set forth in the Texts above referred to. They had need be very strong, and very clearly and unexceptionably to express the Doctrine insisted on from them; and not a small Number neither; otherwise they must necessarily yield to those on the other Side. But indeed these latter are so strong, and so plain, that a reasonable Man who has well considered them will beforehand be well assured, that no clear and strong Texts to the contrary can be alledged. He will no more doubt of this, than he can doubt that Mr. *Whiston* can point out such, if any Man in any Circumstances can. Let us see then Mr. *Whiston's* strong Proofs. He tells us, that the strongest Text from Scripture in the *New Testament* against the *Athanasians* is that wherein our Lord disclaims his Knowledge of the last Day. If this be the Bulwark of the *Arian* (or, as Mr. *Whiston* is pleased to style it, the *Eusebian*) Cause, its Strength is Weakness. This Text is plainly shewn in the following Discourse to make nothing for it. However I will intreat the Reader's Patience

tience a little longer, while I give this Text a more particular Examination in this Place.

Since our Saviour as God received his Essence, and Knowledge from the Father, and is his Son, whence the Father is prior in Order to him as God, in respect of Knowledge, and every other Perfection; therefore in some Sense he might say the Son, meaning himself as *Logos*, and in his Divine Nature, did not know the Time of the last Judgment; as *Irenæus* has long since shewn.

But I will freely admit that our Saviour attributed this Ignorance to himself in a Sense in which it cannot be true of him as God. What will follow from this Supposition to the Prejudice of our Cause?

We prove from other Texts that our Saviour is God and Omniscient. He was also Man, as which it is not improbable but that he might be absolutely ignorant of the Time of the last Day. And that being the Case he might truly say that he (absolutely) did not know when it would be.

And indeed if we consider the parallel Passages in *St. Matthew*, and *St. Mark*, I think it can hardly be doubted but that our Saviour does affirm himself to be ignorant, when the last Day should be, in his human Nature. *St. Matthew's* Words are; *But of that Day and Hour knoweth no Man, no not the Angels of Heaven, but my Father only.* *St. Mark's*; *But of that Day and Hour knoweth*

eth no Man, no not the Angels which are in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

St. *Matthew's* *no Man*, mentioned before the Angels, includes our Saviour, styled in St. *Mark* the Son; which he was in his human Nature on several Accounts, and as Mediator and that Prophet who was to come; and as such was known and familiarly spoken of by the *Jews* under the Appellation of the Son of God, before he appeared. And as such he was so far superior to the Angels that he is proposed as an Object of Worship to them, particularly, in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*. Therefore it is most probable that St. *Mark* repeats the very Words in which our Saviour expressed himself, and in the same Order which he did, placing the Son after, and above the Angels.

It is plain the Disciples enquired of him as the Son of God, that Prophet who was to come and tell them all Things, and not as God. And this Consideration added to what else hath been said on the Subject, I think, absolutely and certainly determines the Words to the Interpretation I have preferred of them.

P.S. I have not loaded the Margin with Quotations from Scripture, the Texts of Scripture referred to being so well known in the *Arian* Controversy. And I suppose this Preface will scarce be read by any body that has not read Mr. *Whiston's* *Memoirs* just before.

CHRIST GOD-MAN.

JOHN i.†14.

And the Word was made Flesh.

THE Author had before told us who the *Word* was; he that in the Beginning was with God, and was God; the Maker, and Governor of the World. This divine Person, he informs us, came into the World, and in particular to his *Peculium*, the *Jewish* People, who most basely and ungratefully did not receive him. And in the Text he acquaints us of the Manner of his appearing; God came among us in human Nature; God was made Man. But the Evangelist, with great Judgment, chuses not to express this astonishing Fact in so plain and literal Language. He, more energetically, and more justly with respect to his Design in this Passage, which, in all Probability, was to affect us with a just, and the profoundest Sense possible, of our Saviour's Condescension and Humility in his Incarnation for our sakes, recurs to a Figure which frequently occurs in all Languages, and all Authors, Sacred and

Prophane, whereby any considerable and essential Part is put for the Whole, in both Parts of his Proposition, and saith not that *Jesus* who was the *Word*, was also Man; but that *the Word was made Flesh*. The original Word $\Sigmaαρξ$, translated *Flesh*, in the *Septuagint* Version of the Old Testament answers to the Hebrew Word $בשר$. which tho' indeed it often signifies the material Part of us, exclusive of the other, yet it is frequently also put for Man, including his whole Nature both Body and Mind; and this is certainly the Meaning of the *Greek* Word in this Place. No body can be better satisfied of this than our Translators were, who nevertheless rendered it not Man, but *Flesh*, which is a Word of precisely the same Import and Extent as $\Sigmaαρξ$; both of them, whilst they principally signify the Body, likewise conveying into our Minds a Sense of the Weaknesses and Frailties, the Infirmities and Miseries of human Nature.

This which I have advanced supposes that *Jesus* being the *Word*, took our complete Nature, both Body and Soul, upon him: Truths which indeed are more especial Subjects of our Meditation at some particular Seasons of the Year: But which ought always to be lively in our Thoughts, and deeply engraven in our Hearts; otherwise we shall not transcribe them

in our Lives and Practice, which is the Reason of their being revealed unto us. They had need therefore to be often, and as deeply as possible imprinted in us, and we to be confirmed and fortified in the Possession of them, both against the Indisposition and Treachery of our own Natures towards them, and the violent and daring Attacks to dispossess and obliterate them, that are daily made from without upon us. And frequent Discourses on these Subjects are necessary, and can never be unreasonable. Accordingly I shall, in the ensuing Discourse,

I. Prove that *Christ* was perfect Man, and had not only an human Body, but also an human Mind.

II. That he was One Person, consisting of Two Natures, the Human and Divine. After which I shall,

III. and lastly, make an Inference or two from what hath been discoursed.

I. I shall prove, That Christ was perfect Man. As to his being made *Flesh*, and having an human Body, it is impossible for us to be certain of any Thing, if we cannot be certain of that: Nor (unless we must except the original *Quakers* for a short Time) do I know of any body that ever questioned it, but some

wild, and senseless Hereticks in the Primitive Church: These Men took it into their Heads to fancy that our Saviour only seemed to be, and do, and suffer those Things, which are related of him, in the Flesh; from whence, I think, they were styled *Phantasiastæ* and *Docetæ*. A good Father, the venerable *Ignatius*, undertakes to confute them, and bestows some Arguments upon the Subject^a; for which, no doubt, he saw sufficient Reason in the Circumstances of those deluded Men (of whose Conversion he did not utterly despair) or^{*} of others, and of the Times. I only just take Notice of this on the account of the Zeal, with which this Apostolical Man animadverted on their extravagant Notion, and the Reason, for which, one sees, he was so full of godly Resentment and Indignation against it, and them for its sake; which Reason was plainly this: That the Reality of our Salvation depended on *Christ's* having really been, and done, and suffered, what is related of him, in the Flesh.

This holy Martyr, who lived, and conversed with some of the Apostles, well knew it was requisite, that our Saviour should have that Nature which he came to save. But he came to save our Souls, otherwise vain had been his Salvation of us. For the Body without the

^a In Epist. ad Smyrn. a § II. ad § VII.

Soul is senseless, and incapable of Reward and Happiness. And therefore the Heresy of the two *Apollinarii*^a, tho' not so apparently, and at first Sight, absurd, and void of Colour from Scripture, was no less ruinous and absurd in its Consequences, than the fore-mentioned. For these truly considerable Men, for their Ingenuity, and the good Services they did to the common Cause of Christianity, maintained, and could make some sort of shift to seem to prove from some Passages in the Gospel, that *Jesus* consisted only of an human Body, and his Divinity, which supplied the Place of an human Soul, or Mind in him. So absurd can very learned Men sometimes be!

These, by the Confession of all, both their Friends and Enemies, who ever read their Writings, as able Men^b as any the very learned

^a They are sometimes styled *Apollinares*; but there being another *Apollinaris*, a quite different sort of a Man from them, to distinguish them from him, perhaps, they are styled *Apollinarii*. They were Father and Son: The latter, who lived long after the former, corrected and improved the Heresy advanced by the other, being driven to many Subterfuges and Distinctions, which, but that he was severely pressed, he would in all Probability never have thought of.

^b I wish many young Students, who are too apt to be influenced by Names, and to fall down before one or two celebrated Characters, which stand on the Side of *Arianism*, to the renouncing their Saviour's Divinity, would consider the very extraordinary Things, that are said of these Person's Parts and Learning by the best Judges of all Parties,

Age they lived in, knew, believed our Saviour to be God. And all Men know that the Godhead is immutably impassible, all-seeing, all-knowing. And therefore our Saviour's whole History, and all the Particulars contained in it exclaim against the prodigious Blasphemy of this *Apollinarian* Heresy. Our Saviour, whilst he was upon Earth, was subjected to, and affected with all the same corporeal Impressions, as other Men are. He hungred and thirsted^c; he enjoyed Pleasure, and suffered Pain; he was a *Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief*^d. Remarkable is his own Expression, when, in his Agonies and Passion, a little before his Crucifixion (sore pressed with the Weight of our Sins, which drew him down from the Bosom of his Father and Heaven, to save us from them) he cried out; *My Soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto Death*^e. And if he had a Soul, true Philosophy will inform, and not suffer us to doubt, but that he had an human Mind. But God's revealed Truth, and the Humanity of our Saviour in particular, tho' it may be confirmed by, and alway agrees with it, yet does not rest upon Philosophy (true,

who conversed with them, and read their Writings; and their monstrous Errors nevertheless (especially of the latter of them, who seems to be the greater Man) even with respect to the Godhead. See *C. Hist. Litt.* under the Names and the Authors there referred to.

^e *Mat.* iv. xxi. 13.

^d *Isai.* liii. 3.

^c *Mat.* xxvi. 38.

(and real Philosophy) nor ask, nor needs its Assistance. It commands the Assent of all Men, and of Common Sense and Reason.

As our Saviour advanced in Years, and increased in Stature, he increased in Wisdom also^f; which he could not possibly do, unless he had an human Understanding. He had also an human Will, and not only the same Will with the Father, with whom he is one God. For his Will could not be subjected to the divine Will, if it was the divine Will. But in his last Prayer, in the Garden, before he was apprehended in order to his Crucifixion, from which his human Nature, on the first Apprehension of it, and till Reflection, declined, he said to the Father; *nevertheless not My Will but Thine be done*^g. Either therefore our Saviour was perfect Man, and had both an human Body and Soul, or no Man ever had, if we will pay any Regard to God's Word; wherein he is not only expressly styled Man, and the Son of Man, and said to have a Soul; but all the Faculties of the human Mind, all the Properties and Affections of human Nature are attributed to him. My

II. Proposition is, That he was One Person consisting of Two Natures, the Human and

^f *Luke* ii. 52. ^g *Luke* xxii. 42.

Divine,

Divine; as the reasonable Soul and Flesh, are one Man, so God and Man, are one *Christ*. And this great Truth also lies plain and obvious in God's Word. But it is a Mystery, and that is no Recommendation of it to the present prevailing Taste.—The Truth is, we are fallen into sad Times, a disputing and perverse Age, of which one great Characteristic is, to stand upon Terms with God, and to be extremely averse to admitting any Thing upon the Credit of Revelation, unless it be previously (as I may say) adapted to our Palate, and perfectly reconciled to our Reason and Prejudices. And tho' the Truth of the Gospel (to say nothing of former Times) has lately, by many learned Performances, almost in every body's Hands, been established upon the sure Foundation of Reason, and God's Providence and Attributes, beyond all reasonable Doubt, or so much as the least Scruple; and therefore the strongest contrary Probabilities with respect to human Reason, supposing them to exist, ought to be submitted to the clear and manifest Sense of Scripture, affirming any Article of revealed Religion; yet too prone by corrupt Nature, and their own way-ward Humours, and impelled by the Spirit of the Times (which, if not chiefly raised, has been mightily cherished and strengthened, I will not say by whom, and by

what Means, among ourselves, I mean professed Christians) it is certain that too many Souls shipwreck their Faith and Salvation on this wretched Rock. Their Reason (I should say their Prejudices) can scarce think that such and such a Proposition is true, or can be God's Word; whence they waver and are in suspense about it, and too many after a while commence secret real Disbelievers even of the whole Gospel; or else, if Circumstances permit, and invite, openly list under the Infidel Banners, for Reasons, and by Steps too obvious to need to be mentioned. So that it is the Part and indispensable Duty of every prudent Minister of the Gospel, and Dispenser of the Mysteries of Godliness, to be furnished himself, and arm his Hearers, who are conversant in the literate, or controverting World, against this Danger; to remove particular Objections to the particular Mysteries of our Religion, and shew why they should be admitted on the Credit of God's written Word, before he proves them to be contained therein. And this Caution is scarce more necessary with respect to any Mystery (for so it may be called) of our holy Religion, than to that which is my present Subject.

Accordingly I will, as well as I can, accommodate myself to this Task imposed upon me by the Necessity of the Times, and perform

form it briefly, but, I hope, fully and to sufficient Satisfaction.

Indeed this is no difficult Undertaking. For the Sum of all that Infidelity hitherto hath objected, and therefore, it may reasonably be presumed, of all that it hath to object to this Mystery of Godliness, *God manifested in the Flesh*, I think, is sufficiently comprized in these few Words. “ That God could not
“ be made Man; or, if he could, ’tis absurd to
“ imagine that he would stoop to so low and
“ mean a Condescension in order to save such
“ a Creature.”

So do Infidels argue, and on this Bottom rest their Hopes, against this fundamental Article of the Gospel and our Salvation. And one needs not fear to exhibit this their final and total Resort in its full Strength. For if Men would but be persuaded calmly to view it with some Attention and Steadiness, and look a little about them, they would clearly discern there to be little in it, and so much against it, that they would be assured it could possibly serve no End, but to shame Men into more Modesty and Caution, and discourage them from making any more such fruitless Attempts in the same Cause. For the first Part of this Reasoning is most effectually confuted and exposed only by putting the Objectors in mind, what the Scri-
pture

pture Doctrine on this Head is. For it is not, that God was made Man, which would indeed be most impossible, and a manifest Contradiction, since God is necessarily Immutable; but, that *Jesus* was both God and Man, One Person in these Two Natures. And what has our Reason to say against this Doctrine? Alas! it knows so little of both the divine and human Nature, that it must needs be assured, that it is perfectly unqualified to interpose any Judgment or the least seeming Probability against it.

All that it knows concerning this Matter is, that it does not apprehend the Manner of this Union, nor is able to conceive *how* it is. And that such Ignorance as this, is no new Thing, but what it must needs expect. For to apprehend the Manner of any Union, necessarily implies and presupposes a Knowledge of the several Natures conjoined in it; and (if I may so express myself) of the Ligaments and Cement effecting and constituting it. And therefore we are completely ignorant of the Manner, and have no Idea of the Union of any compounded natural Body, or Being whatever; even of the Connexion of the Particles of any one Body existing before our Senses. And who can tell how it is that a finite Extension contains an infinite Number of Extensions, or extended Parts? This Conjunction of Finite and In-

finite is indeed a strange and incomprehensible Thing to human Conception. Our Reason demonstrates it to be, and therefore we are assured that in Fact it is. But to know, on proper Authority, that a Thing, or Fact is, is one Thing; and to perceive *how* it is, and apprehend the *Manner* of it, is quite another; between one and the other of which the last mentioned Instance is a Demonstration there is no Connexion.

Indeed all Sense and Reason bear Testimony to the Folly of this Objection. And 'twould be as endless, as 'tis unnecessary to produce their particular Evidences. Only one other Instance, which is of nearer, and more obvious Application to All, however unused to, or qualified for entering into Philosophical Disquisitions, I cannot but mention. I will tell any of these Objectors *how* God and Man are one *Christ*, when he shall tell me *how* his own Body and Soul are one Man. He is not more ignorant of this, than he is of that, for he is in complete Ignorance of both. He has no Sense nor Capacity of perceiving or apprehending either in any Degree. Now, if he be incapable of understanding those lesser Things, how can he expect to be able to understand this much greater? He believes himself to be one Man consisting of Body and Soul, tho' he does not conceive how this is, because his Senses in-
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form him that he is: And will he not then much more believe God when he plainly affirms, that *Christ* is the same Person consisting of the divine and human Natures; only because the Manner of this Union is not, and cannot be apprehended by him? Nothing, sure, was ever so absurd and contrary to Reason as this: the Men who make this Objection, must believe and disbelieve, assent or dissent, not by Reason, but by Prejudice, and Inclination, or Humour.

This is not the only Instance of their doing so. For the same Men proceed and say, If God *could* be One Person with Man, 'tis incredible that he *would* stoop so infinitely below himself for the Salvation of so inconsiderable a Creature as Man; rather than do which, he would save them by some other Means, or by his mere Will and Mercy, without the Interposition of any Means whatever. This is their last and final Objection in its full Force. 'Tis answered, and shewn to be lighter than Vanity against God's Word to the contrary, by only calling to mind the Infinite Goodness, and Wisdom, and Power of God. For he who is endued with these Attributes will, most certainly, effect every End by the best and fittest Means. He needs not, and will not omit what is absolutely best, or exe-

cute it by any but the absolutely best and fittest Means, on any Account. Which is his divine Prerogative and Glory; quite contrary to the Case of any Creature, and much more the Case of so imperfect and finite Creatures as Men. These must not only consider what is best and fittest, and the best and fittest Means of executing it; but must likewise consider themselves, their Abilities, and every Circumstance relating to themselves, and the Case before them; and then make the relative Fittesses, which result from all these Considerations weighed together, the Rule of their Conduct and Behaviour. But God's Ways are not as Man's Ways; the Case is quite different with respect to infinite Goodness, Wisdom, and Power. To the Being endued with these Attributes that which is absolutely best, is relatively so; and the absolutely best and fittest Means of effecting it, is relatively so likewise. Now, unless we perfectly comprehended, and understood the Divine Nature; and our own; and the Nature of Sin; and consequently the Relations and Respects, resulting from our Corruptions and Sins, between us and God: unless we had also a perfectly comprehensive View of the Universe, and God's absolutely perfect Oeconomy with regard to it; it is impossible we should be able to pronounce, or have any Reason;

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Reason, in any Degree, to apprehend, or be persuaded, *a priori*, that the right Mean, and best and fittest Way of God's saving Mankind, and restoring them to his Favour and Presence, was not that which Holy Scripture exhibits to our Faith and Admiration.

The Truth is, whoever will resolve his Prejudices, and seeming Reasons against the Credibility of this Article into their true Sources and Principles, he will find them to be nothing else but Comparisons, or measuring and judging of God's Goodness, Wisdom, and Power by human Pride, Folly, and Impotence; and will be convinced that he has no solid Grounds or Foundation to build them upon; but that he might as well take up this Opinion (I mean *a priori*) That God does not sustain, preserve, and govern the World, by his perpetual Influence, Agency, and Providence, as, that his Son, and God did not join himself to human Nature, and become One Person with Man, the Lord of the Creation, to save the whole human Race.

And if we consider how, when these Prejudices are removed, a true Persuasion of this infinite divine Love, and Condescension affects and fills us with Love and Gratitude, and Admiration of his Goodness, and Wisdom,
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and Power, and raises our Hearts and Apprehensions towards him, and what excellent Ends it answers in the Constitution of our Nature, and the Circumstances wherein we are placed (of which there are sufficient Hints in Scripture, and which have often been displayed by Christian Preachers, and Writers) we must needs be from thence disposed, and must needs conclude it reasonable, to think it probable, that this Article is true; that it is not only not against Reason, but consonant to Nature and Reason. And this I could shew and confirm more at large, if it were needful. But it is not. For it is sufficient for our Purpose to have proved, that Reason does not contradict it, as we have fully and explicitly shewn it does not, nor cannot, in any degree. And therefore all Prejudices to its Credibility, or being admitted on sufficient Authority, being so fully removed; I may now well proceed to shew how clearly, and unexceptionably it is contained in God's Word.

Whereas both in the *Old*^a and *New Testament* we are assured that there is no other God but one, the Father (for he is the Fountain and Originⁿ of both the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and therefore well may, and most commonly is styled God, absolutely, because the

^a In many Places.

Son, who is necessarily begotten of him, and the Holy Ghost, who necessarily proceeds from him, and the Son, are necessarily and essentially contained in him) *Jesus* is in the *New Testament* most expressly styled *God^b*, the true *God^c*, the great *God^d*, *God over all^e*, the Lord of *Glory^f*, the King of *Kings^g*, the Lord of *Lords*. He is one with the Father ^h, and equal with him ⁱ, having the same (individual) Nature with him, as God, tho' having the Godhead and all its Attributes by Communication ^k from the Father, and being God of God, he is inferior (to wit, in Order) to him ^l as his Son, as every Son is to his Father.

He (the same Subject and Person, *Christ*) is likewise plainly styled *Man^m*, and the Son of Man.

Accordingly those Attributes which are inseparable from the divine Nature, and incommunicable to any other, and human Properties are indifferently applied to, and said of him, throughout the *New Testament*.

He is *Alpha and Omega*, the Beginning and the End, the First and ⁿ the Last, and also descended from the Loins of *David*, was con-

^b *John* i. 1. ^c *1 John* iii. 16. ^d *Tit.* ii. 13. ^e *Rom.* ix. 5.
^f *James* ii. 1. ^g *Rev.* xix. 16. ^h *John* x. 30. ⁱ *John* v. 7.
^j *Phil.* ii. 6. ^k *John* v. 17. ^l *viii.* 38. ^m *John* xiv. 28.
ⁿ *passim.* ^o *Rev.* i. 8, 11. ^p *xxi.* 16. ^q *xxii.* 3.

ceived and born of the Virgin *Mary*, and, after a short and miserable Life, expired upon a Cross, within less than these Two thousand Years.

Of him these Words are to be understood: *Thou, Lord, in the Beginning hast laid the Foundations of the Earth, and the Heavens are the Works of thy Hands. They shall perish, but Thou remainest; and as a Vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: But Thou art the same, and Thy Years shall not fail.* Which Words is the Psalmist's Description of God's Immutability. So that it is most impossible to deny, that *Jesus* is strictly and essentially Immutable. And therefore he most undoubtedly consisted of the divine Nature, and of another mutable one: for many, as well as most affecting were the Changes which the Nature and Flesh he received from his Mother, underwent, before he was laid in the Grave, and rose again from thence, and ascended into Heaven, where he now sits at God's Right Hand, and reigns not in his mortal and corruptible, but in his immortal and glorified Body, and human Nature.

He is *Discerner of the Thoughts and the Intents of the Heart*. There is no Creature that is not manifest in his Sight^r; all Things

^o Heb. i. 10, 11, 12. ^p Ps. cii. 25, 26, 27. ^q Heb. iv. 12, 13.

are naked and open to his Eyes. These are plain and strong Expressions of that Divine Privilege, his Omniscience, and the same which the Holy Spirit made use of to express the same incommunicable Attribute of God in the Old Testament. And therefore 'tis plain that, in the Words of St Paul, *in him the Fulness of the Godhead dwells*^b. For he could not be Omniscient unless he was God. And because his divine Nature was veiled in his Humanity, therefore the same Apostle, speaking of him, saith, *in whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*^c. And yet he himself told his Disciples that he did not know the exact Time of the Day of Judgment^d. From whence we may assuredly collect, that the Revelation of this, being no Part of his Office as Jesus and Mediator, it was not communicated to his human Nature. And therefore, his Disciples enquiring of him as the *Messiah* and that Prophet who was to come, when this Day should be^e, he told them he was ignorant of it: Just as the two Parts of the same Man, his Soul and Body, being one of them Mortal, and the other Immortal, he may, according to the Occasion and Circumstances in which he speaks, very properly say, that he is the one,

^b Col. ii. 9. ^c Col. ii. 3. ^d Matt. xxiv. 36. Mark xiii. 32. ^e Matt. xxiv. 3. Mark xiii. 4.

or the other, and either that he shall die, or that he shall not die.

Now how does any Man know himself to be one Man and Person, consisting of Body and Soul, but because he finds that both bodily and mental Affections agree to him? If the inseparable and incommunicable Characteristics of two Natures, the divine and human, in the same Subject and Person of *Christ*, may be allowed to evince, that *Christ* is one Person, God-Man, he undoubtedly is. The same Reason that we have, each of us, from his Senses to believe his own Body and Soul to be one Man; the same also does God's Word give us to be satisfied that *Christ* is one Person in two Natures, the Human and Divine.

Indeed this is a most wonderful Truth: But so are all God's Dispensations, full of Wonder and Rapture; his Creation, his continual sustaining the immense Fabrick of this Universe, and all its Parts; his constant and watchful Care over us, and all our least Concerns, are all over Wonder, most affecting Wonder. They are only not, any of them, any ways equal to this new Creation and Regeneration of Mankind, which, one cannot help being convinced, is God's finishing Dispensation, and the Completion of that infinite Condescension and Portrait of his Attributes
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and Benevolence towards Men, which he eternally designed to strike in his Providence and in our Nature. It is indeed a most surprising and perfect Instance how *God's Ways are not* as *Man's Ways*^a; and how *past finding out*^b they are. And that if we look how high the Heaven is in comparison of the Earth, so great is his Mercy also towards them that fear him. Never certainly was, or can be Condescension to compare with this: Never was, nor is possible to be Admiration like to this. And what is the Use and genuine Effect of this Passion? That Effect, which, if not defeated and obstructed by the Interposition of the Flesh, or opposed by Prejudices, it cannot fail to have in the human Mind and Conduct? To fix our Attention on this amazing Love and Goodness, to seize and possess it of our Understanding, our Heart, our Affections, and all our Faculties, to incite and raise our Gratitude, and enflame our Love to the highest Degree, of which they are capable, of Rapture, and Addiction, and Devotion of ourselves, our Lives, our Souls and Bodies to the Service of our Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. And surely divine Love and Obedience, and all Virtue and Godliness owe but little to those Christians (if we

^a *Isaiah* lv. 8.^b *Rom.* xi. 33.

may call them so) who, under a Pretence of lessening the Difficulties of our Faith in this Article, and in the Gospel, detract, one can scarce express how much, from the Force of this so powerful Motive, most powerfully operative in our Nature and Constitution; which was given us by God; and to which therefore, we may be assured, his final Dispensation, and last and perfect Religion is exactly adapted and commensurate.

And therefore, sure I am, this single Consideration is a much greater Objection to their Opinion that *Christ* is not God, than any they can offer at the Bar of Reason, can seem to be against his being God from his being Man. These have already, under the present Head, been considered; and we have seen what Strength is in them.

This Assertion, that the *Word* and *Christ* is God, is not contained in my Text, and therefore I did not formally undertake the Proof of it, but suppos'd it, as the Text doth; tho' the Proof which I gave under my first Head, from Scripture, that *Christ* is not only *Flesh*, as the Words may seem to import, but perfect Man, consisting both of an human Body, and an human Mind, depends upon its being true that he is God, and not a Creature; for a Creature, of how excellent and exalted
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Whether a Nature, may be ignorant of whatever God pleases, and is mutable, and may be divested of whatever Perfections and Knowledge he was endued with, and again grow in Wisdom, and may suffer. Nevertheless I needed not, in support of my first Head and Proof of it, formally undertake to prove that *Christ* is God; because the Proof of his being God, and endued with the divine, essential, and incommunicable Attributes, is necessarily and essentially included and contained in the proper and only Proof of his two Natures being united in the same Person. For the Proof of this Proposition consists in shewing that the nominal Essence of this Union agrees to *Christ* (for the nominal is the only Essence, and all that we know of any even natural Substance, whether simple or compound, and therefore the Revelation of any supernatural Substance only informs, and can only be expected to inform, us of the same Essence of it.) And the nominal Essence, or in other Words, the Sign and Characteristic to our Understandings and Apprehensions of the Union of any two different Natures or Substances, in one Person, is, precisely, this; That this Subject or Person so consists of those different Natures or Substances, as that he may be said to be either the one, or the other; or both of them; and
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whatever agrees to either, or to their Conjunction predicated of the Person; and even the Properties of either, attributed to the other; as was explained, and for the Reason assigned, in the *Preface* to this Discourse. Indeed, generally, throughout the New Testament, the Person *Christ* being the Subject both of those Propositions wherein he is spoken of as God; and of those wherein he is spoken of as Man; as well as of those wherein he is spoken of as God-Man; therefore, first of all to prove the Union of his two Natures in the same Person, seems to me to be as natural and proper a Way of proceeding in order to a Proof of his Divinity, as any other. Certain it is, that to have this Point well impressed in our Understanding and Attention, to be intimately and familiarly conversant in it, is to be Master of the true Key, and a Facility of applying it, to let us into the Sense and Solution of some Texts, which for want of it must needs seem inconsistent with his being God. And hereupon depends chiefly, or solely, our being confirmed and fixed in our Faith in this Article, against its Adversaries Attempts to unsettle us in it, and dispossess us of it, by means of these very Passages of Scripture. For in the Controversy concerning *Christ's* Divinity, there is no sort of Difficulty with
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Immediate and direct Respect to those Texts of Scripture by which it is generally proved, and which our Adversaries only object to; they are express, clear, and cogent: But these Men raise a Dust, and spread Darkness and Confusion over the Subject by means of the other Texts. But let the true Doctrine of the Alliance of our Saviour's different Natures rise in our Attention, and rule our Thoughts, and these Mists and Clouds instantly fly before it, and disappear; and his Divinity shines like the Sun at Mid-day in God's revealed World, animating and gladdening the new and Gospel Creation; the Life and Soul of it. A little Reasoning and Application of the personal Union in *Christ* will open any one's Eyes, and enable him clearly to discern his Lord and God through his Enemies profoundest Pretences to the contrary, and dissipate all those Terrors which, in defect of this Application, they seem to threaten this Rock of our Salvation with. The Truth of all which, I doubt not, will evidently appear to every impartial Person, that has considered God's Word with regard to this Point of the Divinity of his Saviour, and is at all conversant in the *Arian* Controversy; (and we ought certainly, all of us, to be in a good measure conversant in it;) after what has been already advanced concerning it;

from what will be said to the same Purpose under my next Head ; wherein I proposed

III. and lastly, To deduce an Inference or two from the Doctrine proved in the preceding^a. And what I think immediately and first rises naturally to our Thoughts on this Occasion, is, that *Christ* being God and Man, the Son of God, and the Son of Man, in the same Person ; therefore we are the Children of God, and he is our Fellow-Creature. *I ascend*, saith he, *to my Father, and your Father, to your God, and my God*^b.

Thus we see how justly, and with what Propriety, *St. Paul* styles him the First-begotten of every Creature^c *πρωτογενος πασης της κτιστης*, which may either be rendered the first-begotten of the whole Creation, or of every Creature ; the two Expressions mutually implying and inferring each other. For though indeed the Theme *τις*, itself, and in its several Compositions with other Words, be proper to Production by Generation and Beget-

^a I think (considering the Title Page) it is requisite for me, in point of Veracity, to mention, that much of this last Head is new, and of the rest I preached one Part at *Sherbourne* in *Oxfordshire* a little before *Christmas* 1748, and only the other at *Oxford*, at the Time mentioned in the Title Page.

^b *John* xx. 17. ^c *Coloss.* i. 15.

getting; and $\alpha\lambda\lambda\omega$ to Production by Creation and Making; yet by the personal Union of *Christ's* divine and human Nature, which has made us his Brethren and the Sons of God, this, which would otherwise be an express Contradiction in Terms, is most consistent, and certain Fact. And whether we understand by *every Creature*, all Creatures at large, or only Man, who is often meant by the Word *Creature* in Scripture Language, *Christ*, the eternal *Logos* and Son of God, and eternally designed in due Time to become also Man (whence we are begotten his Brethren) is $\pi\rho\omega\tau\omicron\tau\omicron\kappa\omicron$ and בְּרִיָּה of every Creature, as properly, and in the full Import of this *Hebrew*, and that its correspondent Term in the *Septuagint* Translation, as he that opened the Womb was among the *Jews*: For *Christ* created the World, and all Things (*i. e.* all Creatures) are not only *by him*, but *for him*^a; and therefore he is much more, and more eminently the Lord of his Brethren and the whole Creation, than the *Jewish* First-born was of his Brethren and Family, by God's Appointment; most probably with Reference to, and on this very Account, because *Christ* is natural Heir and Lord of us all and the whole Creation; which Reference, and which Account, I make no doubt also, is

^a *Verse* 16.

the principal Consideration in some other secondary Significations of both these Words in the Old Testament, such as those of *most beloved*, *choice* and *rare*, and the like.

The Passage, in which the Words commented upon, and explained agreeably to the Doctrine exhibited and proved under the foregoing Heads, occur, is entitled, in the Contents of the Chapter, in the common Editions of our *English Bibles*, *A Description of the true Christ*. And so indeed it very plainly and fully is. It sets forth what he is, how related to, and what he has done for us, both as God and Man, and God-Man, consisting of both Natures. *His* (the Father's) *dear Son* (saith St. Paul) *in whom we have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins; who is the Image of the invisible God, the first-born of every Creature: For by him were all Things created that are in Heaven, and that are on Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers: All Things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all Things, and by him all Things consist. And he is the Head of the Body the Church; who is the Beginning* (it might have been rendered, the Principle) *the first-born from the Dead; that in all Things he might have the Prebeminence. For it pleased*

pleased the Father, that in him should all Fulness dwell. And (having made Peace thro' the Blood of his Cross) by him to reconcile all Things to himself; by Him, I say, whether they be Things in Earth, or Things in Heaven^a. These Words manifestly contain that Christ is the Son of God, not only as begotten (in his human Nature) of the Virgin Mary, by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, or on any other Account subsequent to, and presupposing this; but in his divine Nature by eternal Generation, being the Image of the invisible God, and begotten before the Worlds and Time; the Son, who made and preserves the World, and all Things in it; the efficient and the final Cause of all Creatures, and their natural Lord and Sovereign: The very same Things which the same Apostle predicates of him, partly in more strong Terms, and partly more concisely in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, thus; *By whom also he (God) made the Worlds; who being the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person, and upholding all Things by the Word of his Power*^b. These Things are true, and can be true of Christ only as the divine Son of his Father. But being God's Son by eternal Generation, he is therefore his first-begotten of the whole Crea-

^a Col. i. 13—20.

^b Hebr. i. 2, 3.

tion, and in particular of the Creature Man, whose Nature he assumed (otherwise he could not have shed Blood) and became our Brother. In this Nature he redeemed, and obtained Remission of our Sins, by shedding his Blood for us; and is the Head of the Body the Church; and by rising from the Dead, became the First Fruits and Principle of the universal Resurrection of Mankind. In all these several Relations to us he stands, and all these Things (expressed and implied) he did for us, because *it pleased the Father, that in him should all Fulness dwell. And (having made Peace through the Blood of his Cross) by him to reconcile all Things to himself, whether they be Things in Earth, or Things in Heaven.* It pleased God that in the Man *Christ* should all Fulness, *the Fulness of the Godhead* (as the Apostle expresses it in the next Chapter ^a) *dwell bodily.* For the personal Union of *Christ's* divine with his human Nature, is properly its inhabiting in him, as our Soul inhabits in our Body; and therefore the same Apostle, in his Epistle to the *Corinthians*, styles our Body the Tabernacle ^b of the Soul. It was God's Pleasure, that *Christ's* two Natures should be one Person, and that in him and by him should be all his gracious Purposes and Benevolence, and his

^a Verse 9.^b *Cor. v. 1, 4.*

Portrait respecting Man, completed. That he who created, and preserved, and sustains us, should likewise redeem us; and, when we had forfeited his Presence and incurred his Displeasure, reconcile us to himself again, and restore us from eternal Death to eternal Life. Nor is there any possible good Thing which he has not done, or will not do for us, if we will only take Care to discharge the meet and necessary happy Condition of being thus completely blessed by him. In order to which End he has obtained for us, and furnishes us with all possible Motives and Assistances; even that most perfect Guide and Help, his own spotless and perfect Example which he set us in the Flesh.

Oh let not this, and all the Ends of his Incarnation be lost upon us! Let us make a right and complete Use of the Pattern which he left behind him. This Glass of the History of his Life, his Actions, and Sufferings which the *Evangelists* have transmitted to us, let us daily look into and contemplate; let us delight our Eyes with the Beauties and Virtues it exhibits; let us study the Charms it contains, and grow enamoured, and dress and adorn ourselves with them; let us by degrees change and fashion ourselves by this complete Model, into the same Image, from Glory to Glory,
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from one Degree of Virtue and Perfection, to another, till we come behind in no perfect Gift, and are wanting in no Grace, but at last arrive at the Measure of the Stature of the Fullness of Christ ^a.

God grant we all may!—In pursuing our Design, we have fallen on the Scheme of our Redemption, comprehending the Universe; Earth, and Heaven; Time, and Eternity; God, and Creatures; God who redeemed; (the Father, the original Author of this new Creation and Regeneration; the Son who effected it; and the Holy Ghost, who, in virtue of what the Son did for us, agreeably to the Father's and his own Will, is sent by both to sanctify us, and intercedes for us;) and Man who is redeemed; the Means by which he is; and how gloriously, and happily.—

—Let us take a Stand here; and not negligently pass by this Prospect. What a View is presented to us! Is it not finished? What can possibly be added to it? We cannot conceive that any thing can. Nay, we are conscious, and feel that it is completely perfect and full. This Reflection of the Divinity (which is all that our Nature can at present bear; for who can behold God, in all his Splendor, Face to Face, and live?) raises and enlarges all our

^a *Ephes.* iv. 13.

Faculties and Capacities to their highest Pitch, and utmost Extent, moves and gives complete Vigour to every Affection and Passion within us, and perfectly fills and gratifies all of them.

Here surely it is good for us to be! Here how delightful is it to dwell! Glorious Scene! if Nature and Possibility admit of any such! at the Sight of which all the Pumps and Vanities of this World confess themselves, and shrink into nothing, and Contempt; and in comparison of *Christ*, all that this World can offer to seduce us from him, from cleaving and living to him, is most despicable. And why then will any Men, professing and believing themselves to be Christians, be such Enemies to their Lord and Saviour (to speak properly, I should say, such Enemies to themselves) as to have a Bias, and labour to rob our Lord and Saviour of his Divinity? For his Divinity is the Consummation of this awful Creation, and Ectype of the Deity. It is the Soul that animates and gives their full Effects to all its Tendencies in our Nature and Constitution. How does the Supposition of his not being God impair the divine Splendor and Glories of it? I have already animadverted, how such a Supposition weakens our Gratitude and Love, and affects all Godliness and all
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the Virtues, which depend on divine Love, and rise or fall together with, and in proportion to it.

And I will conclude this Discourse with an Application of the Doctrine explained and proved under the preceding Heads, to a complete Rescue of the only Passage in the New Testament which may seem to bear hard on our Saviour's Divinity, that has not already clearly been obviated, and forced from them, from the Violence which these its Oppugners do to this Text, in order to strip him of his Godhead, as by its Authority; and so to make the inspired Writer guilty of false Reasoning from his Incarnation; which, if he be not God, and their Interpretation of this Text be true, does not yield that Lesson and Pattern of Humility (that Condition and Principle of all other Graces and Goodness; for *God resisteth the Proud, and giveth Grace to the Humble*) which he raises from it.

The Passage which I mean is in the Beginning of the second Chapter of St. *Paul's* Epistle to the *Philippians*, which the *Arians* so much boast of, as decisive in their Favour. So unhappy are they in this their most notable Attempt in their abominable War against Heaven, and the Son of God, and God. For this Text is so far from serving their Cause,
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that it contains some other Demonstrations of our Saviour's Divinity ; beside its being impertinent to the Apostle's Design with which he introduces it, except on Supposition that *Christ* is God : And if we retain in our Minds the true Doctrine of *Christ's* Person, we shall readily discern there is not the least Glimpse or Appearance of *Arianism* in any Part of it.

I do not say that this Text directly and expressly affirms, that *Christ* is equal with God ; though our Translation has these Words in it. Not but that the Original, in *Grammar*, and the *Greek* Phraseology, will bear this Version ; but it may be questioned whether it stands so well with the Writer's Argument and the Context. However this be, if *Christ* be God, therefore, being the second, and a different Person in the Divinity from the Father, who is the Head and Origin of the other two, he is, in strict Propriety of Speech, equal with God. Now between God, and Creatures there is no Medium, but whatever is not the one, must be the other. And therefore if our Saviour (*viz.* in his first and original Nature) existed before he was a Creature, he is the true and eternal God. And if God alone be the Lord of all his Creatures, and all Creatures are by Nature Servants ; then our Saviour certainly existed before he was a Creature ; because it is said in

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the Passage before us, that he *took upon him* (and consequently had not before, and originally) *the Form of a Servant*.

He is expressly said to be *in the Form of God*, before he became a Servant and Creature by assuming human Nature; which certainly either directly signifies, or at least necessarily supposes and implies that he is God; because no Man in his Senses will deny that the parallel Expressions, in the same Sentence, of the *Form of a Servant*, and the *Likeness of Men*, either directly assert, or necessarily suppose and imply his being a Creature and Man.

But as clear, and certain a Demonstration, as any other, of our Saviour's being God, from this Passage, is the Purport of it, and the Use to which the Holy Spirit puts his Incarnation, in it. Men being all of the same Nature and equal, therefore those Men that are in the same, or equal Ranks and Conditions of Life, have an equal Right to the same Honours, Privileges, and Distinctions in the general. Nevertheless it is necessary Humility for all to be willing and disposed to wave this Privilege, and actually to cede from this their otherwise natural and inherent Right, in such Circumstances (which often occur) as make it expedient for them to prefer others, in no Respect their real Superiors, to themselves, for
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the Peace sake, and Welfare of Society, and Mankind. Now if our Saviour was indeed of the Divine Nature, and nevertheless willingly forewent his divine Prerogative, emptied himself of his native Privileges, Distinctions, Splendor, and Honours, veiling them in the assumed Nature of a Creature, and a humble and suffering Man for our Sakes; every Body clearly sees what an excellent Pattern and Lesson this is of the mentioned Duty. But if he was not God, but a Creature ever so like, and as like as it is possible for a Creature to be, to God; for him to entertain a Thought of being equal to his Creator and Lord, had been most abominable Rebellion, Prophane-ness, Blasphemy, and Ingratitude; and this so much the greater by how much the more he was indebted to him; and therefore his not affecting Equality with him, could be no Instance of Humility, or Example of it for the Imitation of others. Yet thus the inspired Writer urges Christians to be ready to condescend below their Equals (for the *Philippians*, to whom this Exhortation was immediately addressed, could not every one be vastly inferior to all the rest) or even Inferiors: *Let this Mind, saith he, be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the Form*

of God *εχ αρπαγμαον ηγησαλο*^a (which, both in point of Grammar, and conformably to the Genius of the *Greek* Language, and also consistently with the Context, may be rendered, did not esteem it as a Prey, or Booty, that is, as a Thing not to be parted with, or given up at any Rate, or on any Account: but let our Adversaries translate it their own Way, and as if the Substantive had not been derived from the first Person singular of the Præter Passive, but from the second, and been *αρπαζω*, or as if it had been *αρπαγω*, they certainly very well might, *non rapuit*, did not eagerly co-

^a To settle the true rendering of these Words, we should, I think, consider this Expression *αλληλους ηγαμενοι υπερεχοντας*, in the preceding Verses, which set forth the Duty recommended to us from *Christ's* Example. Must *ηγαμενοι υπερεχοντας* be rendered *esteeming others better*; or, *preferring*? If the former be the true Translation, no doubt these Words spoken of *Christ*, *εχ αρπαγμαον ηγησαλο* must be construed, he did not esteem it Robbery, or (which comes exactly to the same) a Thing stolen or usurped; or else, did not esteem it a Prey or Booty not to be parted with, &c. But if the true Translation of *ηγαμενοι υπερεχοντας* be *Preferring*, *ηγησαλο αρπαγμαον* must be rendered *non rapuit*. If our *English* Translation stands, the Sense (to be consistent with the Context) is, that *Christ*, though his unerring Wisdom and infallible Consciousness could not but know he was equal with God, yet he emptied himself of his Divinity: And therefore we ought to be very ready to esteem others better than ourselves, &c.

yet and snatch, to wit, when the Time was come, in which the divine Mercy was pleased to save Mankind by his Incarnation) *to be equal with God, but made himself of no Reputation, exalted, emptied himself of his divine Splendor and Worship, and took on him the Form of a Servant, and was made in the Likeness of Men: And being found in fashion as a Man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross^a.* Thus did the Son of God, and God become a Creature, the Subject and Servant of God, under a moral Obligation to Obedience to his Will, and faithfully and universally to perform it. For though *Christ*, as God, laid down his Life, and no Being, or Person, had Power or a Right to take it, or to require it of him as a Sovereign, or Lord, of his Subject and Servant; yet as Man he *ought to obey* his Father's Will and *Command*, and did obey even to the Death of the Cross. And being both God and Man he has both the Merit of his divine Nature's undertaking and submitting to all this for the Sake of the End obtained by it; and is rewarded for it (for *Christ's* human Nature is properly capable of Reward, and receiving an Accession of Happiness from being joined to the divine Nature, and partaking of divine

^a *Philip. ii. 5-8.*

Honours, both those which the *Word* originally had, and that new Worship or Extolling, not real Exaltation, which is the Consequence of it) as the Apostle proceeds to inform us, *Wherefore, saith he, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus* (Christ, our Mediator and God-Man) *every Knee should bow, of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth, and that every Tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord*^a, (he adds) *to the Glory of the Father*. From whence the *Arians* would draw this Inference, that *Christ* is not God; when it is evident to Reason, and a necessary Consequence of the Divinity of our Saviour, and the Relation he stands in, as God, to his Father, who is the Origin and Fountain of both the other Persons, of their divine Nature, their Attributes, and all their Actions, That whatever the Son and *Christ* does, and whatever Honours and Worship he receives, are to the Glory of the Father.

We have before us a wonderful Example of Condescension and Humility in *Christ's* Incarnation, and of its Reward in his Exaltation. Let us all learn of him, and be lowly and humble as he was, and in due Time, if we faint

^a *Verses 9, 10, 11.*

not, we shall, after his Example, also be exalted and glorified together with him. Eminent Condescension and Humility is indeed a noble and divine Virtue and Accomplishment. And if *Christ*, who is the Pattern and Model of, or rather is all Perfection and Virtue itself, descended from the Bosom of his Father, and became one of us here upon Earth for our Sakes, and took on him our Natures, in order to bear our Infirmities, and be our Physician, and save our Souls and Bodies; perhaps the most perfect and excellent (actual) Imitation of his Condescension and Incarnation, which the ordinary and common Course of Things admits of, is that of those who stoop from their high Rank and Condition in this Life, and casting its Privileges and Exemptions behind them, condescend to employ the great Talents and Improvements God has intrusted to them, in the like good Uses; especially in the Relief of the Souls, or Bodies of their and *Christ's* poor Brethren, of whom he every where throughout his Gospel declares himself the special Patron; nay he declares, that he will even accept personal Kindnesses done to them, as if they were done to himself ^a.

^a *Matt.* xxv. 45.

In proportion as all are humble, and imitate *Christ's* Example to the best of their Power, they will be distinguished, and reign in Glory with him. And therefore may they (for this therefore is a Prayer which we may offer with Faith) in God's due Time be so rewarded and exalted, God, we beseech thee, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord!

To whom (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost) be ascribed, as is most due, all Honour, Glory, and Praise, now and ever. *Amen.*



S. I. N. I. S.

